

MINUTES
MICHIGAN STATE TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION WORKSHOP
February 28, 2008
Lansing, Michigan

Meeting noticed in accordance with Open Meetings Act, Public Act 267 of 1976.

Present: Ted Wahby, Chair
Linda Miller Atkinson, Vice Chair
Maureen Miller Brosnan, Commissioner
James S. Scalici, Commissioner

Also Present: Kirk T. Steudle, Director
Larry Tibbits, Chief Operations Officer
Leon Hank, Chief Administrative Officer
Frank E. Kelley, Commission Advisor
Marneta Young, Commission Executive Assistant
Jerry Jones, Commission Auditor, Office of Commission Audit
John Friend, Bureau Director, Highway Delivery
John Polasek, Bureau Director, Highway Development
Myron Frierson, Bureau Director, Finance and Administration
Denise Jackson, Administrator, Statewide Transportation Planning
Susan Gorski, Manager, Statewide and Urban Travel Analysis
Tim Hoeffner, Administrator, Intermodal Policy
Sharon Edgar, Administrator, Bureau of Passenger Transportation
Tony Kratofil, Deputy Region Engineer, Metro Region

Excused: Jerrold M. Jung, Commissioner
James R. Rosendall, Commissioner

A list of those people who attended the workshop is attached to the official minutes.

Chair Wahby called the workshop to order at 9:55 a.m. in the Bureau of Aeronautics Auditorium in Lansing, Michigan.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES – GOAL RE-DEFINITION AND MEASUREMENT FOR ROADWAYS (GRAMR)

Overview and Historical Context – Denise Jackson

As our Road and Bridge Condition Goals have reached their year of completion, we need to determine where we go next. Just as your guidance on determining the road and bridge targets were important to establishing direction and ultimate success, so will your input on where we should be focusing, especially near term. The environment is different from where we were 10 years ago when these targets were set. We need to broaden our performance measures and targets to be more holistic and integrated, and to reflect the goal areas that you have set through the MITP. We also need to acknowledge that our current funding level will not allow us to achieve the desired vision for the transportation system that the public has articulated.

Therefore, we are seeking your direction on how to pursue what they have deemed most important.

The workshop intent is to provide a brief overview of the MI Transportation Plan, to engage the Commission on the relative priorities of the MI Transportation Plan goals and objectives, and to start down the path of setting performance targets for our integrated transportation system.

Performance Measurement is not new at MDOT. In the area of Program Development there have been 3 primary areas within the program that we have worked on to develop targets and as a department we have focused heavily in our day-to-day work and in reporting to the public. Those areas are: Pavement Condition (90% good by 2007), Bridge Condition (95% good freeway bridges, 85% good non-freeway bridges by 2008), and Safety (no more than 1 fatality per 100 million vehicle miles of travel). We have been very successful in each of these areas: 90% good pavement achieved in 2006, continuing to make steady progress towards reaching 85/95% good bridges, and achieved Safety goal on the state trunkline system.

In addition to performance measurement related to program development, MDOT also measures program delivery. Early plan completions enable us to do so well in delivering that program on time, within scope and budget. Our goal of letting 90% of the program in the first six months helps both the industry and suppliers better plan for each year and allows many of our projects to be completed in one year (this saves time and money for the motoring public). Using the early plan completion and early lettings allows us to have great success in delivering the entire program we said we would within the fiscal year. Each year we have been over 95% in that measure. On the construction side to carry us through the final construction of the project, we have had a long standing performance measure that compares the bid amount to the final cost of a completed project (less that 5% overruns and extras during construction). This can be seen as a measure of plan quality as well as good construction management. Looking back on the past 5 years we have been well under that 5% goal.

Since MDOT set the first major condition target in 1997 we have evolved as an organization which necessitates a new direction in performance measurement. Our asset management approach extends well beyond roads and bridges. We are becoming much more integrated, multi-modal (in programs in processes), and operationally focused (efficiencies of existing system). Additionally, the adoption of the MITP and the public vision tells us that we need to strengthen the link between transportation and Michigan's economic vitality and quality of life.

This often-repeated maxim "What gets measured gets done" recognizes that performance measurement can focus the attention of decision-makers, practitioners, and the public. Performance measures have many functions. They can be used to frame what attributes of the transportation system are most important, provide information on current conditions, evaluate the success of implemented and on-going projects, provide a metric for communicating with decision makers and the public about past, current, and expected future conditions, and serve as criteria for investment decisions in the transportation planning process.

No questions were forthcoming.

Future Direction/Michigan Transportation Plan Framework and Prioritization of Objectives – Tony Kratofil and Susan Gorski

We conducted government-to-government consultations with Native American tribes, stakeholder interviews, Economic Advisory Group and Stakeholder workshops, Public Open House meetings, Attitudes and Perception surveys from the public, as well as public comment and participation analysis. The STC was actively engaged in the development of the long-range plan. Commissioner Rosendall was Chair of the Economic Advisory, as delegated by Chair Wahby. Frank Kelley was updated regularly by the project manager on the progress. Regular update presentations were provided, by the project manager and through the Director updates, to the Commission to keep them informed. There was a Commission workshop on the final draft plan for public review in March 2007.

The long-range transportation plan (MI Transportation Plan) defines the vision, goals and strategies for the next 20 years. The purpose of developing vision, goals and strategies is to clearly articulate what is important. The Vision is *where we want to be*, the Goals are *what we want to achieve*, and the Strategies are *how we will achieve the goals*, with decision principles to implement the strategies. The Vision for the long-range plan incorporates the core values, principles, and characteristics of the preferred transportation system. The Vision is a transportation system that is purposeful, prioritized, coordinated, safe, advanced, integrated, appropriate to the setting, flexibly funded, and responsive to the needs of the users.

Intensive public outreach was conducted as this plan was developed, and the message was very clear. The public wants greater transportation choices, greater access to transportation facilities, modernizing, enhancing and connecting the existing system, and really reducing the vulnerability of risk.

Within the long-range plan we have four specific goal areas: Stewardship, Safety and Security, System Improvement, and Efficient and Effective Operations. The goals and objectives are the desired outcomes or changes to the transportation system determined through public workshops, Economic Advisory Group (EAG) meetings, and MDOT management direction. Each goal area has objectives which are associated with three categories: integration, economic benefit, and quality of life.

Challenges to achieving the goals are: insufficient revenues overall to invest as much as might be desirable in all aspects of the system, we need to prioritize short term (5-10 years) investments, and determining how we can leverage what we are currently doing with today's resources. We need to focus on operations and integrated transportation will help move Michigan closer to its goals regardless of the level of funding.

Commissioners were given handouts listing the goals and objectives and asked to rank the MITP objectives in order of priority. Things to be considered in identifying priorities include (but are not limited to): the need for short term progress/improvement, improved quality of life, Michigan's economic climate and competitiveness, and efficient and integrated transportation system. Lastly, Commissioners are requested to identify which objective(s) are most important.

Questions and Discussion

Stewardship Goal

Preserve transportation system investments, protect the environment, and utilize public resources in a responsible manner.

The Stewardship goal focuses on MDOT's roles and responsibilities associated with being good stewards of Michigan's resources. The goal is based on a holistic view of resources, to include funding, physical transportation assets (e.g., highways, transit systems, and airports), the physical and human environment, and the Michigan economy. The objectives under the Stewardship Goal incorporate issues and topics that were addressed in the following current MDOT SLRP goal areas: Preservation, Strengthening the State's Economy, Transportation Services Coordination, Environment and Aesthetics, and Land Use Coordination.

Objectives:

1. Preserve the quality and condition of all transportation system elements.
2. Conduct sound asset management practices to optimize the benefits of preservation investments.
3. Leverage transportation funding to maximize transportation investment.
4. Maximize the benefits of transportation investment to the Michigan economy.
5. Minimize negative externalities and maximize the positive impacts that transportation has on the physical and human environment.
6. Improve coordination between transportation decision-making and land use planning.

Commissioner Brosnan asked, regarding Objective #1, if this is saying we are going to maintain our current goal of the 90%/85% good.

Mr. Kratofil answered that it could—this is the type of direction they are looking for from the Commission—feedback as to how far they want them to take it.

Commissioner Brosnan asked if they could expand on these.

Ms. Gorski added that the Michigan Airport System Plan (MASP) is being updated. They are taking these goals and objectives and looking at what their current targets and existing MASP has and asking the same questions as far as if these are the right target areas.

Commissioner Atkinson asked if Stewardship includes the oversight of the planning and spec process.

Mr. Kratofil answered that in a very broad sense it is part of Stewardship, but what they are trying to focus in on is Stewardship of the transportation system. The Plan is more externally focused on the system that is out there; the department has a Strategic Plan that deals with the internal operations and how effective and efficient we are there.

Commissioner Brosnan asked Ms. Gorski to expand on Objective #4.

Ms. Gorski explained that this objective is looking at what the economic impacts are of our investments. Our EAG and stakeholders told us that we really need to ensure that we are maximizing those benefits.

Commissioner Brosnan stated that that is the one she is having the most difficulty putting some real substance to and asked for an example.

Ms. Gorski answered that, in the development of the Five Year Program for example, putting together that package of preservation and IE jobs, is that the right package in terms of maximizing our investment. There are certain tradeoffs that you have if you do one project or pick an alternative over another—through our day-to-day activities this should always be kept in mind.

Director Steudle added that it might be helpful to capture their thoughts at the bottom in the comments section on what they are thinking as they prioritize these.

Commissioner Atkinson asked where in the 6 objectives they see the overriding objective of service to the people in Michigan.

Ms. Gorski asked, when she says services, if she is saying maintaining quality of life or in terms of accessibility to transportation choices and options.

Commissioner Atkinson answered both of those and accessibility in their lives to jobs, services in the community, etc.

Ms. Gorski responded that she would see accessibility when we talk about System Improvement. Stewardship and System Improvement could be looked at as sister goals because we are talking about being good stewards and preserving what we have, but when we talk about System Improvement we are talking about the modernization and enhancing the system to improve mobility and accessibility options. On the preservation side we are talking about needing to provide a safe environment for our users through the minimizing of our negative externalities, etc.

Commissioner Atkinson stated that she appreciates that part of it, but the question is bigger. For example Objective #1 suggests something like maintaining a status quo, whereas over the period of time that this plan applies we are talking about massive changes in how people access transportation, primarily driven by fuel scarcities and changes in fuel. Commissioner Atkinson suggested that part of this objective would include service, use or availability, so that it would read “preserving the quality and the condition and the service and availability of transportation systems”. We are not just talking about roads—we are talking about public transportation, rail and air. This means we have to talk about not just preserving the system as is or its condition, but making it meet the needs of the people.

Ms. Gorski responded that when we look at this goal area we talk about the preservation and strengthening the economy but we are also talking about the coordination in transportation services and we need to be good stewards of that.

Commissioner Atkinson stated that that would be the 4th one (Objective #4).

Ms. Gorski said that was correct.

Commissioner Atkinson added that that could be added too.

Director Steudle summarized that the sister goals are this one plus System Improvement. As you flip through the 4th one (of System Improvement) is “modernize facilities to accommodate the efficient movement of people, goods, and services”. He wondered if this really gets at the point Commissioner Atkinson made—focusing on not just a highway mode, but how we efficiently move people, goods, and services. Maybe it is covered in the System Improvement section than it is in the Stewardship section.

Commissioner Atkinson responded that her feeling is that it is not covered unless some of these concepts are included such that the 1st one would include quality, condition and service or availability. The 3rd one would say “leveraging transportation funding to maximize transportation investment and scope”. For example, right now the proportion of funding that we try to leverage for rail as opposed to roads is a different proportion than I see us needing to do in the future. The scope of the system has to be included whenever you’re talking about an investment; the same thing with the 4th one, which would be “maximizing the benefits of transportation investment and the services to the Michigan economy”. Investment, economy, preservation of assets are all very important goals and part of stewardship, but you’re only doing that when people need them; and so service, availability and scope are also part of stewardship.

Mr. Kratofil responded that he has noted that and, assuming that these are on the top priority, this may be something that the team addresses.

Commissioner Atkinson asked for an understanding of Objective #6.

Ms. Gorski stated that this objective is based on what we heard from our public involvement and stakeholders. There was a clear discussion in all of our workshops and meetings about coordination, and particularly with land use planning, that we need to have a better coordinated effort to do that. Different areas and different parts of the state do it better than others. As we are making these decisions, it is important that we understand the land use and the potential impacts that we may have as we move forward. It falls under a stewardship role because we are talking about being responsible in terms of our environment as well as our land use and other development opportunities.

Mr. Kratofil added that part of the goal is utilizing public resources in a responsible manner. As we struggle to preserve existing elements, if growth and development is happening in greenfield areas, as people are leaving center cities, we are building more infrastructures they have to support yet the population isn’t necessarily growing at the same rate. The idea is to try to get more coordination between those land use decisions and what transportation facilities and services need to be provided so that we are not wasting resources on things that maybe can be provided if the land use decisions were made differently.

Director Steudle also added that the land use decisions are made at the local level (townships and cities) and is not something that is under the states' control, nor MDOTs' control. What this objective does is try to provide an education link between the two so that decision makers that are voting on land use changes or patterns understand the connection between the two of them.

Commissioner Brosnan asked if, for clarity, we are not just talking about economic impacts, but about environmental impacts as well.

Ms. Gorski stated that she was correct.

Safety and Security Goal

Continue to improve transportation safety and ensure the security of the transportation system.

The Safety and Security goal continues MDOT's long- standing commitment to build, maintain, and operate the safest transportation system possible. The objectives under the Safety and Security Goal emphasize both traditional safety initiatives aimed at reducing fatalities, injuries, and crashes/incidents, as well as efforts to address new transportation system security needs in the wake of 9/11 and increased threat from terrorism.

Objectives:

1. Reduce fatality, injury, and crash/incident rates on all modes.
2. Reduce the vulnerability of transportation facilities and its users to terrorist attacks, natural disasters and other risks.
3. Reduce economic losses due to transportation crashes and incidents.
4. Manage risks and responsiveness to ensure transportation system and border crossing continuity for passengers and freight.
5. Provide a safe environment for transportation users through engineering, enforcement, and education activities.

Commissioner Scalici asked Ms. Gorski for an example of Objective #3.

Ms. Gorski stated that this goes to the investments that we make that can reduce the impact of an incident or crash, i.e., by having a safer barrier or guardrail—things that reduce the injuries if a crash happens. We are not only talking about physical injury but the property losses that are associated.

Mr. Kratofil added that there are strategies we can employ to create situations like Ms. Gorski mentioned—certain barrier systems for certain intersections. A roundabout is going to have a lower space to crash so you'll have less damage and less injury costs. If this is of a high priority, we might say we need to invest a little more money.

Chair Wahby commented that if a truck knocks out/damages a major bridge, it has an impact to both sides of the expressway—businesses, etc.

Mr. Kratofil added that how we protect the infrastructure from that type of impact is another aspect of how you look at measures on that.

Commissioner Atkinson asked if signing is a part of this—speed limit control, signing on highways in advance of a change in direction, speed or lane.

Mr. Kratofil responded that it potentially could if there is a specific geometric feature where statistics is showing a high rate of “crash cost”.

Commissioner Atkinson asked if it is fair to say that Objectives #2, 4 and 5 only differ with respect to the mechanical carry-out—are they just three different ways of doing the same thing (educational activities show up in the 5th one).

Ms. Gorski responded that when we talk about reducing the vulnerability of transportation facilities and its users, we are talking about everything from the bus stop shelter (or transfer center) to our major bridges or major facilities. When we talk about managing our risks to ensure system and border crossing, we are talking more towards our major border crossing in the state of Michigan. This is why they were separated out.

Mr. Kratofil added that the distinction between #2 and 5 is that #2 deals more with the vulnerability in the system and #5 deals more with the safety of passengers or individuals as they traverse through the system.

Director Steudle added that #5 also deals a lot with our partnerships (engineering side, education side and the enforcement all represented together).

Commissioner Atkinson asked if, regarding Objective #4, this might include expanding the databases with respect to collisions, cause of collisions, investigation costs, etc.

Ms. Gorski answered yes. When we talk about safety and security, there are some transportation security measures that are going on that aren’t spelled out here. The overall goal here is to manage the risk and make sure that we are responsive to anything that may occur.

Commissioner Atkinson responded that she understood the term risk, but clarified that her question goes more to mechanism. At the present it seems that we have some fledgling databases (on trucks and certain kinds of collisions), however she asks if this includes a goal of expanding our databases on the frequency of certain kinds of collisions, frequency of certain places—what would be revealed in an engineering study of a particular intersection—so that you can assess the actual risk.

Mr. Kratofil responded that it is probably imbedded in that objective. If there were to be performance measures and targets associated with something like that, then there would have to be data associated with it. He also added that this more emphasizes on border crossing and that kind of movement.

Commissioner Atkinson commented that it may be that that concept belongs under Objective #3 rather than #4—you reduce losses by identifying risks and preventing them. For example, one of the major losses where she lives is logging trucks that lose their load; 3-5 a year and some of them include fatalities, a lot of them include damage to property. She was astounded to find out that even Michigan Tech, which is doing some research on the causes of those, has no database

on the frequency with which they occur, where they occur, the kind of trucks they involve, or even whether they had chains, straps, wheel pilots, hub pilots, etc.

Leon Hank, Chief Administrative Officer, from the audience, responded that the department could get back to her regarding some major studies that have been done on logging trucks within the last 2 years (there are databases with that kind of information).

Commissioner Atkinson stated that we still had not gotten anywhere.

Mr. Kratofil commented that that is a very good tangible example. There are a lot of these that we don't have much data on and if we are going to make sure it rises to the top, it's going to demand that kind of data and data management.

Commissioner Brosnan added that she feels the combination of Objectives #1 and 3, in terms of being able to prove over the course of time that we reduce fatalities, that we are a safer system to transport goods and people through in Michigan (whether its rain, rail error or road), and at the same time reduce or maintain low insurance rates, then we have an economic indicator that makes Michigan more viable to drive and ship the products through to the degree that we can turn this around and make this a plus that drives Michigan's economy. These numbers are really worth gathering to get not just a reporting tool, but as part of what we're trying to achieve.

Ms. Gorski responded that it might be helpful in the next workshop to bring out some of the information they are discussing as we develop the Plan—the technical reports, etc. Some of the data gaps have already been identified. This has been done so we know where we've been and where we have to go to set those targets.

Commissioner Brosnan commented that part of how they are prioritizing can only be done based upon the information they are knowledgeable about. If the department had gone further in the identification of some of the indicators, they probably wouldn't have placed this so high on the priority list.

Director Steudle added that we need to be able to show Michigan as the safest state to drive in, live in, produce and ship products in.

System Improvement Goal

Modernize and enhance the transportation system to improve mobility and accessibility.

The System Improvement Goal emphasizes the various areas where MDOT can either make direct investments or support and encourage investments by other entities to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of Michigan's transportation system. The recommended objectives under the System Improvement Goal focus on improvements to modernize, expand, and connect the system to support economic growth and better facilitate the movement of goods, people, and services. The goal area also identifies the importance of considering local values during the planning, design and implementation of system improvements.

Objectives:

1. Expand intermodal connectivity and the number of modal options for freight and passengers.

2. Address system bottlenecks and weaknesses to reduce congestion, enhance continuity, and improve modal connections.
3. Improve travel time reliability and predictability for passengers and freight.
4. Modernize facilities to accommodate the efficient movement of people, goods, and services.
5. Address congestion to reduce its cost to businesses and the state's economy.
6. Respond to the unique transportation needs of economic development opportunities.
7. Expand transportation system access.
8. Reduce delay.
9. Employ context sensitive solutions to respond to the values that the public places on aesthetics, cultural resources, and natural landscapes.

Commissioner Atkinson asked if the order in which the objectives appear a priority or are they all equal.

Ms. Gorski responded that they were all equal from the public standpoint.

Commissioner Brosnan commented, regarding Objective #9, that she doesn't view context sensitive solutions as part of System Improvement as much as it would be part of Stewardship.

Ms. Gorski responded that this was one of those objectives that, as we went across all the goals, the workgroups felt it fell here. Context sensitive solutions is an approach to what we are already doing. As an objective she would see this as a decision principle more than an objective.

Commissioner Brosnan stated that she has it at the bottom of her list and doesn't want them to think that it's the lowest; she expects that it is applied all the time.

Efficient and Effective Operations Goal

Improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the transportation system and transportation services and expand MDOT's coordination and collaboration with partners.

The Efficient and Effective Operations Goal reflects MDOT's desire to get the greatest possible performance from Michigan's existing transportation assets and future system improvements. The goal area also addresses the importance of operating a transportation system and providing services to ensure citizens and stakeholders have modal choices. The recommended objectives under this area focus on the application of technology, stronger coordination and cooperation with public and private sector partners, and improved intermodal transfers.

Objectives:

1. Improve existing system capacity through the application of new technologies and strategies.
2. Coordinate transportation services supplied by both public and private sector providers.
3. Address institutional barriers to inter-jurisdictional cooperation.
4. Collaborate with providers to deliver programs and services better, cheaper, and faster.
5. Manage highway access to balance capacity and development considerations.
6. Collaborate with private sector to improve the efficiency of intermodal freight and passenger transfers.
7. Enhance the transportation experience through better, timelier traveler information.

8. Operate systems to ensure the public has an adequate set of transportation choices.

Commissioner Brosnan asked who we view as our partners in this goal.

Ms. Gorski answered that the partners are the shippers, those providing private sector transportation options in the transit side, and those who provide vehicle infrastructure technology.

Mr. Kratofil added that it is pretty broad. It could also be emergency service providers (police and fire), freight, contractors, and private sector ventures that are collecting traffic information.

Commissioner Brosnan commented that in the goals they have looked at so far, contractors appear to be one of the biggest partners—she just wanted to make sure the department had considered the need to work with them. She then asked if this is the only place that consideration is given within the Plan.

Mr. Kratofil answered no. As part of our Strategic Plan (the internal part of MDOT's operations) partners is one of our main goal areas as well. This is inherent in how we want to approach doing our business, and the contracting industry is certainly one of our biggest partners.

Commissioner Brosnan commented that we are looking here in terms of measurement when we talk about this portion of the strategy and what our priorities are. She asked if this is the best place in the Plan where we are going to measure how well we are doing with our partnership.

Mr. Kratofil answered yes. The one where it fits the most, when you talk about the contracting industry, is Objective #4—delivery of the program.

Commissioner Brosnan stated that she just wanted to make sure she hadn't missed anything from previous discussions.

Director Steudle added that an additional partner would be the public sector providers—airport managers, transit system managers, etc.

Commissioner Atkinson (looking at Objective #6) asked if this included, besides the private sector, federal partners particularly when you're talking about coordinating with Amtrak.

Director Steudle answered yes, Amtrak and the private sector.

Commissioner Atkinson asked, regarding Objective #3, what institutional barriers to inter-jurisdictional cooperation is this referring to.

Ms. Gorski responded that this goes back to what we heard through the workshops and the myriad of agencies and jurisdictions that need to come to the table. It was one of those things that they recognized that we need to do better, and MDOT can be a leader in helping to move that forward (townships, rural communities, etc.)

Commissioner Atkinson commented that over the last couple years we have had a smoldering discussion going on about involving federal friends and others in the plan to take 10th Street

through Northland of Dickinson County and connect through to SR-553 and make a southern approach to the airport. All I hear from everybody is that there are too many jurisdictional boundaries. She then asked if this is what they're talking about with this objective.

Ms. Gorski responded that this is exactly what they are talking about.

Next Steps

Commissioners were asked to take the "Relative Priority of MITP Goals" sheet of the handout and indicate the relative priority of each goal by "slicing the pie" into proportional pieces (indicate the approximate percentage of the whole that they think each goal should represent in the department's investment strategy). The Performance Measurement team will use this to identify measures and targets/scenarios for the highest priority items. They will present the targets/scenarios at the next Commission workshop and the Commission will decide high level investment strategies. A series of workshops will be held to set investment strategies.

Mr. Kratofil asked that the forms be turned in to the Commission Office for forwarding to the Performance Measurement Team.

Mr. Kratofil asked for questions.

Chair Wahby stated that this is one of a series of workshops and the Commission will still have an opportunity to come back with a final Plan.

Mr. Kratofil answered yes, absolutely.

Mr. Kelley stated that he would work with Director Steudle, Mr. Kratofil and Ms. Gorski to get the two excused Commissioners up to speed.

Director Steudle acknowledged this arrangement.

No other questions or comments were forthcoming from the Commissioners or members of the audience.

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Commission, Chair Wahby declared the workshop adjourned at 11:20 a.m.

Frank E. Kelley
Commission Advisor